

A community study on the relationship of stress and periodontitis

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Psychological factors may increase the risk for periodontal diseases. Contemporary conceptualization of the stress process supports the evaluation of stress at three levels: stressors, moderating and mediating factors, and stress reactions. Objective: This study was to investigate the relationship of periodontal disease in terms of clinical attachment level (CAL) to psychosocial stress, making reference to the major components of stress process. Methods: A cross-sectional study of 1,000 subjects aged 25 to 64 years in Hong Kong was conducted. Subjects were asked to complete a set of questionnaires measuring stressors including changes, significant life event and daily strains, stress reactions including physiological and affective responses, and coping and affective dispositions. CAL was assessed. Results: Individuals with high mean CAL values had higher scores on the job and financial strain scales than periodontally healthy individuals ($P < 0.05$), after adjusting for age, gender, cigarette smoking and systemic disease. Depression, anxiety trait, depression trait, problem-focused coping, and emotion-focused coping were also related to CAL. Logistic regression analysis indicated that all these factors were significant risk factors for periodontal attachment loss, except problem-focused coping, which reduced the odds of CAL. Individuals who were high emotion-focused copers, low problem-focused copers, trait anxious, or trait depressive had a higher risk of more severe CAL. Conclusion: Chronic job and financial strains, depression, inadequate coping, and maladaptive trait dispositions are significant risk indicators for periodontal attachment loss. Adequate coping and adaptive trait dispositions, evidenced as high problem-focused coping and low anxiety/depression trait, may reduce the stress-associated risk.

[Periodontal Research - Diagnosis / Epidemiology](#)

[The Preliminary Program for International Association for Dental Research - 20th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Southeast Asia Division and Southeast Asia Association for Dental Education - 16th Annual Scientific Meeting \(Sept. 1-4, 2005\)](#)